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From: Diane Pleschner-Steele [mailto:dplesch@earthlink.net]
Sent: Tuesday, March 22, 2005 5:26 PM
To: Melissa Miller-Henson; Phil Isenberg
Cc: MLPA Comments
Subject: MLPAComments: RSG participation and study area boundaries

Hi Phil and Melissa,

I'm attaching for your information and for distribution to the BRTF the comments of the California Wetfish Producers Association and wetfish industry on the above subjects.

First, we strongly support David Crabbe for appointment to the regional stakeholder group when the time comes for that action.

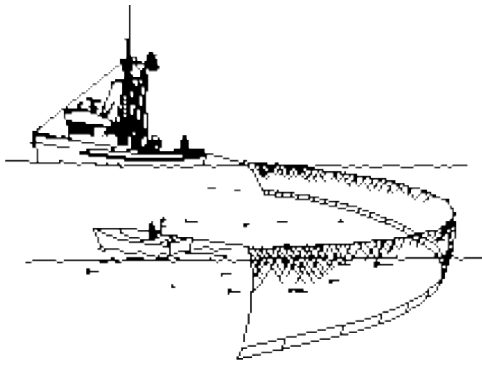
Phil, David mentioned to me that you've talked, and re: industry support for his nomination, please consider this letter as a vote of virtually the entire wetfish industry in support of David's appointment to the RSG. Wetfish is the largest, most historic fishery in Monterey, and David is the best qualified and dedicated to represent industry interests.

Re: study area boundaries, we recommend that the BRTF designate a central coast study area with northern boundary no farther north than Pidgeon Point, around the corner from Pt. Año Nuevo, and no farther south than Pt. Arguello. It is very important to stop short of Point Conception in the south, which would draw in a large troop of fishermen who are still licking their wounds over the reserves implemented around the Channel Islands, and which have removed as much as 20 percent of the southern squid catch, according to logbook investigations... Setting the northern boundary farther north than Pidgeon Point would also draw in a large group of San Francisco Bay fishermen who are largely unaware of this Initiative at present ... I know Jim Martin and other recreational fishing reps. worry about this also....

Thanks very much for considering these points. We're still working on our comments re: the revised master plan framework, and hope to have those to you ASAP.

All the best,
Diane

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CALIFORNIA WETFISH PRODUCERS ASSOCIATION

Representing California's Historic Fishery

March 22, 2005

Mr. Phil Isenberg, Chair
MLPA Blue Ribbon Task Force
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1311
Sacramento, CA 95814
Attn: Melissa Miller-Henson

Subject: Comments on Regional Stakeholder Group Membership and Project Area Designation

Dear Mr. Isenberg and Task Force Members:

Once again we thank you and the Task Force for this opportunity to comment on the MLPA Initiative process and issues of concern to the wetfish industry. I'm submitting these comments on behalf of the California Wetfish Producers Association, representing the views of the majority of fishermen and processors in Monterey and southern California who harvest and process "wetfish", including sardines, mackerels, market squid, anchovies and other species. This complex of fisheries produces the lion's share of total statewide commercial fishery landings, valued at more than \$100 million annually.

Wetfish species represent 95 percent of commercial fishery landings in the Monterey region, thus this fishery is critically important to the community, both socio-economically and culturally. It is essential that the Regional Stakeholder Group include a representative from Monterey's wetfish fishery who is knowledgeable about the fishery and its role in the region. CWPA and California's wetfish industry strongly support David Crabbe as our nominee to serve on the RSG, when appointments are made. I know David volunteered at the February BRTF meeting in Monterey, and we resoundingly second his nomination and urge you and MLPAI staff to appoint him when the time comes to convene the regional stakeholder group.

Regarding the boundaries of the central coast study area, we would greatly appreciate your understanding of the use patterns of different fishing communities on the central coast. The area between Point Conception and Point Arguello, on the southern end of the area under consideration, is heavily utilized by southern California fishermen from many fisheries, including squid. The Santa Barbara fleet relies heavily on the area "between the points", as do wetfish fishermen from San Diego and San Pedro. Extending the study area all the way to Point Conception would necessitate involving another complete group of southern CA stakeholders in the RSG and MLPA Initiative process, perhaps resulting in dividing the group into two sub-sections, which would pose both logistical and financial hardship. We encourage you to extend the study region's southern boundary no farther south than Point Arguello, thereby avoiding potential problems.

Similar problems exist at the northern boundary of the central coast study region. The wetfish industry recommends setting the northern boundary of the study region at Pidgeon Point, several miles north of and "around the corner" from Pt. Año Nuevo. If the northern boundary were extended farther north, for example to Pillar Point or Pedro Point, slightly above Half Moon Bay, this would involve yet another demographic group of San Francisco Bay fishermen, and entail forming yet another sub-group, further exacerbating logistical and financial challenges.

For these reasons, CWPA and the wetfish industry recommend setting the northern boundary of the study area no farther north than Pidgeon Point and the southern boundary no farther south than Pt. Arguello.

We urge you to give serious consideration to our support for David Crabbe when approving membership in the Regional Stakeholder Group and our recommendations for northern and southern limits when determining the boundaries of the central coast study area.

On behalf of California's historic wetfish industry, I again express our thanks for this opportunity to comment.

Best regards,

Diane Pleschner-Steele, Executive Director